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Wm. H. H. J. J.

Mr. FRENCH's SERMON,

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

Reverend Mr. KENDALL.



A
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION
OF THE

Reverend JAMES KENDALL,
Over the First Church and Congregation in PLYMOUTH,
JANUARY 1, 1800.

By JONATHAN FRENCH, A. M.
Pastor of the South Church in ANDOVER.

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1800.

SERMON.

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION

OF THE REV. JAMES RANDALL.





MATTHEW XVI. 18.

UPON THIS ROCK WILL I BUILD MY CHURCH,
AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL
AGAINST IT.

SOON after the fatal apostacy of man, the kindness and the love of God appeared in the gracious promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. God was pleased to appoint his Son to be the Saviour of them who should believe ; and gave him to be head over all things unto the church. On the pillar and ground of his mercy and truth he founded his church, and erected his mediatorial kingdom, in opposition to sin and all the powers of darkness. When the promised Messiah came into the world, to prepare the way for his own sufferings, to fulfil the eternal purposes of the Father, and make atonement for sin, the enemies to God and religion, with rage and malice, rose against him. The doctrines and miracles of Christ excited curiosity and inquiry among the people, who he was ; and they appeared to be much divided in their opinions concerning him. This gave occasion for our Saviour to put this question to his disciples : " Whom do men say that I am ? They answered, Some say thou art John the Baptist ; some say Elias,

Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Having heard from them the opinions of others, he pointedly asked their own: "But whom do ye say that I am?" Peter, in the name of the rest, replied, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Then said Jesus unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." We are told that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And it is through the instrumentality of the appointed means of grace faith is ordinarily to be expected. But it is not the less the gift of God on that account. We never arrive to the saving knowledge of Christ without the influences of grace from heaven. "To them gave he power to become the sons of God, who believe on his name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Gospel salvation is not derived from human reason and philosophy, but from God. No man cometh to Christ except the Father, through the influences of his word, spirit, and grace shall draw him. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." Figuratively alluding to Peter's name, which signifies a rock, Christ said unto him, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." With respect to the meaning of these words, there are several opinions. But I think with those, who suppose *by this rock* was intended the truth contained in Peter's answer, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Upon this truth, as upon the rock of eternal ages, the christian church, and the whole christian scheme, are founded. Upon this rock God will build his church and establish christianity, and not
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all the force of men and devils united shall be able to prevail against it.

From these words we may take occasion to observe,
 1. The church of God always has had, and it may be expected always will have, numerous and powerful enemies in the world. By *Church*, our Saviour here undoubtedly means his church universal, the great body of saints throughout the world. The first christian church in Jerusalem was called the whole church, who all assembled in one place. But as they increased, and spread into other parts, they were necessarily divided into smaller societies, still retaining the name of *Church*. Thus the church at Antioch, where the disciples were first called Christians, the churches of Ephesus and Judea, Corinth, and the seven churches of Asia, and numerous others, were all parts of the same body, of which Christ is the head. They are all the redeemed of the Lord, the church he hath purchased with his own blood; and which, by the ancients, were called, "The church scattered throughout the whole world:" "The church of God under the whole heaven." The church universal, in whatever age or part of the world, has ever had its enemies. Satan, the enemy of all good, has set up a kingdom in the world, in opposition to the kingdom of Christ; and ruling in the hearts of sinners, the children of unbelief and disobedience, has employed them as his agents and emissaries, if possible, to overthrow the mediatorial scheme of salvation, and bring down both present and future destruction upon the whole human race. The prevalence of vice and infidelity, and the wickedness of man in the antediluvian age, when the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, was an evidence of
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the exertions of the enemies of God against his church. The numerous wars carried on by infidel and heathen nations against the Israel of God, the memorable bondage of the church in Egypt, the captivity in Babylon, the slaying of the prophets, and stoning them that were sent unto them, their astonishing sufferings by torture, by scourging, bonds, and imprisonments; when some were sawn asunder, some were slain with the sword, and some were driven into mountains, dens, and caves of the earth; these, and numerous other instances, evince the exertions and cruelties of the adversaries of the church against her, from the flood to the birth of the Messiah. When he came into the world, the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things. The kings of the earth set themselves, and rulers took counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed; and slew the Prince of life, whom God hath made both Lord and Christ. The massacre of the children at Bethlehem, to destroy the child Jesus, his crucifixion, and the ten persecutions that followed; in which some were wrapped in skins of beasts, and devoured by dogs; some were crucified, some burnt alive, and others tortured upon the rack; "houses, filled with christians, were set on fire; and whole droves were tied together with ropes, and cast into the sea, and drowned;" all these horrid events serve to show how numerous and inveterate the enemies of the church were. Through every succeeding period to this day, the enemies of the church, either more openly or secretly, have attempted to destroy christianity; and have even wished to erase the name of Christian from the face of the earth. Nor have they stopped here; but many philosophers, as they call themselves, have risen up, and attempted, and are

are still endeavouring, with every artifice, not only to suppress christianity, but to erase the very idea of the existence of God. In a word, so numerous have been the enemies of the church, that if all their exertions to destroy her were written, we might say, in the hyperbole of the evangelist, "The world itself would not contain the books."

Antichrist, or the man of sin, who, by learned and judicious writers, is considered as one and the same, has reared his monstrous head, and will wage war against the true church till the glorious millennium shall commence. During the reign of antichrist, the enemies of God and religion will make numerous, though unavailing exertions to destroy the Redeemer's kingdom. The last enemies of the church, predicted in prophecy under the figurative titles of Gog and Magog, with unnumbered legions, will come as from the four winds of the earth, and make war upon the saints, but shall not succeed. For, as in the words of a learned writer,* "They shall not be able to hurt the church and city of God; but shall be destroyed in an extraordinary manner, *by fire from heaven*: and the devil himself, the promoter and leader of this new apostasy and rebellion against God and Christ, shall not only be confined, as before, but shall be *cast into the lake of fire and brimstone*, where he shall be punished, together with the beast and the false prophet, who were cast in before him, and shall be tormented, day and night, forever and ever."

We may observe, 2dly, That however numerous or powerful the enemies of the church may be, she will prosper, increase, and be established forever; and no

* Bishop Newton on the prophecies.

power

power of earth or hell shall be able to prevent it. The power, promises, and providence of God are all engaged for her ; therefore she cannot be destroyed. In all her distresses, the arm of the Lord hath held her up. He delivered the church from bondage, slew the first-born in Egypt, and drowned the pursuers of Israel in the red sea. When the Assyrians, with a mighty army, in the days of Hezekiah, threatened the total destruction of the church, the Lord sent his destroying angel, and slew an hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians in one night. But time would fail to mention the instances of the providential deliverances of God's ancient church. The language of her divine Protector was, *I will whet my glittering sword, mine hand take hold on judgment ; and I will render vengeance to mine adversaries ; and be merciful to my people.*

When the Roman powers plied their forces against the christian church for three hundred years, under all her oppressions and persecutions she increased. "She was enlivened by fire ; born again of the ashes ; and grew, though in irons. For one slaughtered christian were produced a thousand." So that it became a proverb, "*The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.*" God's care for his church will always continue ; and through all the changes of time, the rise and fall of empires, she will steadfastly remain forever. The church is built upon a sure foundation, Christ himself being the chief corner stone. The Lord hath established Zion, and she never shall be moved.

Let us then, in the third place, inquire, by what means Christ effects his glorious, divine purposes, in building up, and establishing his church. These great designs are effected by the ministry of the word, and
instituted

instituted means of grace, through the operations of the divine spirit. To this end, among the last things done by our Saviour before his ascension, was his appointing and commissioning an order of men, as his ministers, to propagate his religion ; and, as servants of the most high God, to show unto men the way of salvation. " Go," said he, " and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Soon after our Saviour's ascension, we find the apostles engaged in electing one, to supply the place of Judas, who had forfeited his ministry, by betraying his Lord and Master. Others also were consecrated, and commissioned to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain Elders in every city. " When Christ ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ; he gave to some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," which is the church.—These also were to ordain others. But the importance of the work required great caution. They were therefore commanded to lay hands suddenly on no man ; but to commit these things to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also ; and so on, to the end of the world. In the bible, which contains the words of eternal life, Christ hath revealed every essential doctrine ; and shown us what we are to believe and practise, that through his grace we may be entitled to salvation. The bible is the commission and directory of every gospel minister. Call no man father on earth, for one is your
master,

master, even Christ. The bible describes the qualifications and duties of a gospel minister toward his people. It requires him to be a good man ; and as a good steward, to be found faithful ; to preach the word ; to feed the flock of God with the sincere milk of the word ; and to watch for souls, as one who must give an account. He is to teach them the way of salvation, and to feed them with sound doctrine. He is to declare the whole counsel of God, and to keep nothing back that may be for the profit of his hearers ; but to feed them with knowledge and understanding. He is to study the sacred scriptures, and give himself wholly to the work of the ministry ; and to show himself an approved workman, who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth ; and to take heed to himself, and to his ministry, that through the grace and mercy of God, he may both save himself, and them who hear him.

The bible also points out the duty of people toward their pastors. They ought to know and esteem them in love and affection ; and to hold them in reputation and honor, for the sake of their office and work ; to be tender of their characters ; to remember them in their prayers ; to give every possible aid and encouragement to the ministry, in building up the Redeemer's kingdom. The bible also shows us how christian brethren ought to conduct toward one another. It teaches them to exercise bowels of love and compassion toward their fellow-christians ; to be of one heart, of one soul, having the same love, being of one accord ; to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace ; and to live in peace, that the God of love and peace may be with them.

them. Behold, how good and pleasant it is, for brethren thus to dwell together in unity !

Thus the bible, the blessed book of God, is the standard of our faith and practice ; it is the great, the divine directory for the priesthood and for the people. It shows how gospel ministers ought to be qualified, and how they should preach and practise, and rule and behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. The bible points out the reciprocal duties of pastors and people. " We beseech you, brethren," said the apostle Paul, " to know them who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you ; and esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."

Thus, through the ministry of the word, and the instituted means of grace, the God of glory will build up Zion, and establish her forever.

Hence we learn, that notwithstanding many parts of the church may be persecuted and driven into corners ; and some of them, like the once flourishing churches of Asia, may be suppressed, and totally destroyed ; yet the church universal is fixed ; God will make her walls salvation, and her gates praise. Mount Zion cannot be removed, but will abide forever ; and will finally come off more than conqueror, through him who loved her, and gave himself for her.

What infinite folly is it, then, for men or devils, by force or artifice, to attempt the destruction of the church ? For however numerous the devices of her enemies may be against her, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. It is written in the word of eternal truth, " upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell

hell shall not prevail against it. And heaven and earth shall sooner pass away than one tittle of that word shall fail."

Waving all further inferences and reflections from the subject, a few addresses will close.

My first notice is due to my young friend, who is now to be solemnly consecrated to the work of the ministry, and to be set over this people in the Lord.

Dear Sir,

You are called into the work of the ministry at a period when vice and infidelity abound ; and the enemies of God are numerous, artful, and busy in their endeavors to overturn christianity, and spread deism and atheism over the world. I trust you come therefore to the work in the strength of the Lord Jesus, and in the power of his might, and will set your face as a flint, and be valiant for the truth. As a good foldier of Jesus Christ, having on the whole armour of God, the shield of faith, and the breast-plate of righteousness, taking the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God ; you will combat vice and infidelity in every form ; and endeavor to enlighten, comfort, and edify the faints ; and agreeably to the nature of your office, exert your every endeavor to build up and increase the Redeemer's kingdom. You are called from an important employment in governing and instructing youth,* to take the oversight of this large, respectable, and well-informed society. You are to follow a succession of serious christian divines on the ground where our forefathers first worshipped in this country. Agreeing with them, as I conceive you do,

* As a tutor in the University at Cambridge.

in every doctrine essential to salvation, I am confident you will endeavor to build upon the same foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. As Christ, our Lord and Master, makes use of the ministry, to effect his glorious divine purposes in building up and establishing his church; in the whole course of your ministry, it will be your care, dear Sir, to keep this great object in view. Under an impressive sense of this, you will, with great seriousness and fidelity, pursue the business of your high and holy calling. You will preach the word, and hold up to the view of your hearers, the important doctrines and duties of our holy religion, drawn not from the fancies and opinions of men, but from the holy Scriptures. Though the time should come, when many will not endure sound doctrine, yet, from a long and intimate acquaintance with you, I trust that you, my brother, whether men will hear or forbear, will endeavour faithfully to do the work of an evangelist, and make full proof of your ministry. You will not indeed strive about words, which profit not, and which serve only to subvert your hearers; but will endeavor to speak the things that become sound doctrine, as a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, giving to every one a portion in due season. You will endeavor to hold fast the faithful word, that by sound doctrine you may be able both to exhort and to convince gainfayers. In all your instructions, you will endeavor to shun profane and vain babblings, i. e. those idle speculations and empty harangues, which serve only to promote the cause of irreligion, which is the general effect of foolish and vain disputations. They are not adapted either to inform the mind, or mend the heart. A captious, disputatious disposition,

disposition, and a delight in vain philosophy, or oppositions of science falsely so called, generally result from pride of heart, and great self-conceit. Instead of serving the cause of religion, they do but engender strife, and increase to more ungodliness. An enlarged and just view of the great design of the ministry, will be an incentive, my brother, not only to study and preach the doctrines, but also to teach and inculcate the great practical duties of our holy religion. While you make Christ, the Son of the living God, and him crucified, the foundation of all your preaching, and show that all our salvation is of grace, you will also insist upon the necessity of holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. It would be dangerous, indeed, to lead people to rest upon their own works for salvation : but it would be equally dangerous to place the essence of religion in the mere belief of any doctrine whatever. If we look through the whole bible, and attend to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, we shall find them preaching the necessity of faith for pardon and justification ; and at the same time urging, with unremitting assiduity, the necessity of obedience. Thus says the apostle Paul, “ By grace are ye saved through faith : and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God ; not of works, lest any man should boast.” And in the next verse adds, “ For we are his workmanship, created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.” In his solemn charge to Titus, he insists upon these doctrines. “ After that the kindness and love of God appeared,” said he, “ not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; that being justified

justified by grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life :” It immediately follows, “ This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works.”

Thus, my brother, by rightly dividing the word of truth, looking constantly to Christ for assistance, you will accept my warmest congratulations on the pleasing prospects before you ; and to wish you a long and prosperous ministry, and good success in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus spending your days in building up, and increasing the kingdom of Christ here, may you hereafter shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as a star of the first magnitude forever.

My next respects are due to the Church and People of God in this place.

Brethren and Friends,

The place and the occasion naturally bring to our recollection some of the extraordinary events, which attended the founding and building up the church of God in this land. To escape persecution for religion, and that deluge of ignorance and superstition, vice and infidelity, which threatened to overwhelm their native country, our forefathers, like Noah and his family, were driven into the ark. A hundred and seventy-nine years and a few days have elapsed since that ark, containing the little persecuted flock, supported under numerous sufferings, and protected against opposing elements, by that God, who will ever protect his church, rested at this place ; and landed them on yon rock, which thus became the step-stone to the New-England churches ;

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and, on that account, will be rendered venerable to future generations.

In this then inhospitable land, surrounded with savage enemies, they erected the worship of God, and kept the Christian Sabbath. Though attacked by sickness, threatened with famine, and menaced by fierce and cruel tribes of idolatrous heathen, divine providence seemed to whisper to them, in the soothing language of the all-compassionate Saviour, *Fear not, little flock ; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* The promise has been thus far fulfilled. With pious gratitude, you may now say, hitherto the Lord hath helped us. The little shoot, first planted here, hath grown into a great tree, that hath sent forth its branches far and wide. Upwards of four hundred congregational churches, besides those of other denominations, may be now numbered in this state only.

How many divines, magistrates, politicians, statesmen, warriors, and respectable citizens, can trace their descent from the first settlers in this place? From one,* who arrived in the first vessel in December, 1620, descended the great, the wise, the good, the renowned Dr. JOHN ADAMS, President of the United States ; whose invaluable life and illustrious abilities may God long preserve. He ever respected the zeal and piety of his forefathers ; and is himself not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. How are these words of ancient prophecy
verified ;

* Mr. JOHN ALDEN. A daughter of Mr. Alden married a Mr. Bais, Elder of the first church in Braintree, now Quincy ; a daughter of Mr. Bais married a respectable Mr. Adams, who was grandfather of the President.

verified ; “ The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose ; and the wilderness become a fruitful field.”

The trees of the forest once waved their boughs over the spot, where this temple of the Lord now stands, concealing, perhaps, the hut of the savage, or the den of ferocious beasts. But, blessed be God, instead of the terrific howlings of beasts of prey, the war-whoop, and the death-song ; fearless of the terror by night, or the arrow by day, without any to molest or make afraid, you and your children may here undisturbedly assemble to pray and praise, to hear the word of God, and enjoy his blessed ordinances.

But few instances are perhaps known, in which a people have been more highly favoured in the enjoyment of the ministry and ordinances of the gospel, than this ancient first church in New-England. May these blessings be continued till time shall be no more.—When your pious pastors, who were not suffered to continue always by reason of death, have been taken from you, the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, hath raised up others, and set them over the congregation, to go in and out before you, to dispense the word of truth, and break to you the bread of life.*

While

* The following note, giving some account of public teachers in Plymouth, was abstracted from an appendix to a sermon, preached at the ordination of the late Dr. Robbins ; written by John Cotton, Esquire, 1760.

When the church came over in 1620, their pastor, the Rev. John Robinson, tarried in Holland, where he died, March 1, 1624-5, aged about 50.

Mr. William Brewster, elder of the church, officiated as teacher occasionally till his death. He died April 16, 1644, aged about 80.

Mr. Lyford preached with them a while, and was rejected, March, 1623-4. Mr.

While we sympathize with you under the bereavement of your late pious and beloved pastor, whose name will be long dear to you, we give you the joy of this day in the Lord, commencing a new year, which brings to you another Pastor, as we trust, after God's own heart, to stand in the gap, and to make up the hedge. May he come to you in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of peace ; and may you receive him

as

Mr. Rogers succeeded him in 1628, but became disordered in mind, and was sent back to England the next year.

Mr. Ralph Smith was next chosen their pastor, continued with them 5 or 6 years, and in 1635 resigned.

After him, they chose Mr. John Reyner to be their teacher. He continued among them about 18 years, then resigned, and left Plymouth in November, 1654 ; and afterwards settled in Dover, where he died in April, 1669. Mr. Charles Chauncy was chosen colleague with Mr. Reyner. He officiated with them about 3 years, but refused to settle ; and was afterwards elected president of the college.

Mr. James Williams was their next minister.

Mr. William Brimfield succeeded him ; but neither of them tarried long.

Mr. John Cotton was ordained June 30, 1669, resigned his office October 5, 1697, removed to South-Carolina, Nov. 1698, and died Sept. 18, 1699, aged about 60.

Mr. Ephraim Little was ordained Oct. 4, 1699, and died Nov. 14, 1723, in the 24th year of his ministry, and 48th of his age ; and was the first minister buried in Plymouth after the settlement of the place, which was 103 years.

Mr. Nathaniel Leonard succeeded him. He was ordained July 29, 1724, and on account of bodily infirmities resigned in the year 1755.

The late Dr. Chandler Robbins succeeded him, and was ordained January 30, 1760, and died June 30, 1799, aged nearly 61.

Their present pastor, Mr. James Kendall, was ordained January 1, 1800, whose life, health, and usefulness, may God long preserve.

as a rich gift of Christ, From an intimate acquaintance with him, I am satisfied you will find him a man found in the faith, with a heart engaged in the great work of the ministry, to feed the sheep and the lambs of the flock ; and to watch for souls as one, who must give an account. Permit me, with unfeigned respect, to wish him and you many happy years together in this world, and crowns of glory, honor, and happiness in the world to come.

Under your late bereavement, how did you, and the friends of Zion around you, tremble for the ark of God in this place ? With what religious joy and gratitude should the hand of God be acknowledged, that has conducted you, with so much unanimity and peace, to so speedy and happy a resettlement of the gospel ministry among you. If, as some suppose, departed spirits are conversant with the affairs of this world, with what joy must the blessed spirits of your forefathers, of your departed ministers, parents and friends of later date, with all the saints and angels above, look down upon you, giving praise to the glorious Head of the Church, that they are permitted to be witnesses of the transactions of this day ; that you are not scattered upon the mountains, as sheep having no shepherd ; but, after so short an interval, with so much peace, harmony, and love, are engaged in continuing the ministry, and the worship of the God of your fathers. For this event, they are perhaps now tuning their heavenly harps, striking their golden lyres ; and, with fervor and extacy of devotion, making the heavenly arches resound with praise to Him, who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever.

A few words to this respectable audience will close.

Brethren,

Brethren, Friends, and Fellow-Citizens,

Permit me affectionately to congratulate you, that we have lived to another anniversary of the landing of our forefathers, and to see this first day of a new year. While wars, the most dreadful and distressing, have raged so extensively among other nations, and thousands and thousands of our fellow-mortals have gone down to the shades of death, we are yet among the living to praise God, who hath permitted us, in peace and tranquillity, to be witnesses of the solemn, joyful transactions of this day. But sorrow hath mingled with our joy ! The past year has closed upon us with a gloom ! Our beloved WASHINGTON is no more ! WASHINGTON, the great, the brave, the wise, the prudent, the friend to liberty, to his country, to religion, to mankind, is gone ! How are the mighty fallen, and weapons of war perished ! Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth ! May his memory remain engraven upon the heart of every good American, as with the pen of iron and the point of a diamond. But though we mourn, it is not without consolation. Having sacrificed his private interest and ease, and gone through numerous dangers and unparalleled exertions to save his country from former oppression, he has not closed his eyes in sorrow, to see his beloved America subject to any intriguing, tyrannical, rapacious power ; but has gone down to his grave in peace ! And dying, has left his country free, with many great and good men, both in the cabinet, and in the field, with the illustrious ADAMS at their head. Let us humbly put our trust, not in any arm of flesh, but in the Lord of hosts, with whom is everlasting strength. Let us give praise to the great Captain of our salvation, who once died, and dying, hath conquered the powers of

of death and the grave ; hath risen again from the dead, and lives forever, and with whom all the blessed shall hereafter live. Through him, this corruptible will put on incorruption, this mortal put on immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory !

While, on this solemn and joyful occasion, we are assembled on the spot, where the church of Christ was first planted in this country ; while we consider the bold and enterprising adventures of our pious forefathers, who first landed here, and the greatness of their sufferings, that they might worship God according to the dictates of his word, and their own consciences ; our minds are struck with awe and veneration for their memories ; for that religion, that supported and comforted them ; and for that providence, that guided and protected them in all their ways.

If the church founded upon the rock of eternal ages, and fixed upon that immoveable basis, will increase, and finally triumph over all her enemies ; let us then, of whatever class or denomination, ever respect christianity, the ministry, the word and ordinances, and all the institutions of the gospel. Let us ever exert ourselves in the support of the religion of Jesus ; and esteem it our highest honor and happiness to be of the number of Zion's friends. Then, when all her enemies shall be confounded, and clothed with eternal shame, we shall come to the general assembly, the church of the first-born, who are written in heaven ; and with an innumerable company of angels and holy spirits, the redeemed of the Lord, there join in ascribing glory, and honour, and praise, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, world without end.

AMEN.

THE CHARGE,

GIVEN BY

THE REV. JOHN HOWLAND.

THE ancient apostolic practice, at the ordination of a gospel minister of Jesus Christ, was by prayer, and the laying on of hands. In conformity to that example, and the practice of the congregational churches, we are now assembled in this house, to ordain a Pastor over the First Church of Christ in Plymouth; the oldest church, I suppose, in America; a church that has walked in the faith and purity of the gospel, and kept her first love: a church that has been favoured with able, learned, and pious ministers; have lately been deprived of one, who was a burning and shining light.

God, who is the repairer of breaches, and with whom is the residue of the spirit, we trust, will supply this church with a man after his own heart.

It having pleased a holy God, in kind providence, to unite the minds of this church and congregation upon one to be their pastor, whom, we suppose, is qualified for the great work of the gospel ministry; and God, who hath the hearts of all in his hands, hath inclined the mind of Mr. JAMES KENDALL to accept of their invitation; we, the ministers of Christ, by virtue of the authority derived to us from the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, ordain you a minister of Christ in general; committing to you ministerial power and authority, wheresoever God, in his providence, shall give you an opportunity to exercise the same; and a pastor over the First Church of Christ in Plymouth, in particular.

We charge you to take heed to yourself, to your behavior and conduct, (for many eyes are upon you), that you be blameless, vigilant, sober, of good behavior; given

given to hospitality ; apt to teach ; not given to wine ; no striker ; no brawler ; not greedy of filthy lucre ; not covetous. But in all things shew thyself a pattern of good works, in word, in conversation, in faith, and in charity. Give attendance to reading, meditation, and prayer. Study to approve yourself to God a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth ; giving to every one their portion in due season.

We charge you to take heed to your doctrine, that it be sound, uncorrupt, free from error, grave, sincere ; not teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, but the truth, as it is in Jesus ; the pure word of God, which maketh wise to salvation, through faith in Christ, which is able to save your own soul, and those of your charge. Feed Christ's sheep, and feed his lambs.

We charge you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you preach the word ; be instant in season and out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with much patience, and with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

We charge you to administer the sacraments of the New-Testament ; baptism to believers and their infant seed ; the Lord's-supper to persons professing faith in Christ, who are capable of examining themselves, regular in life and conversation.

We charge you to administer the discipline of Christ's church to offenders, that they may be brought to repentance, recovered from the sin into which they may have fallen ; not to lord it over God's heritage : do nothing by partiality.

Finally, you are to bless, in the name of the Lord.

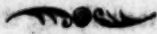
Now, dear sir, if you keep this charge, we declare unto you, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, will give you a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

AMEN.

THE
RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM SHAW, OF MARSHFIELD.



My respected Auditors,

THE giving the Right Hand of Fellowship to a Minister of the Gospel, upon his induction into office, is an ancient and sacred rite. We ground it on apostolic example. When James, Cephas, and John perceived the grace that was given to Paul and Barnabas, they gave unto them the Right Hand of Fellowship. This rite, though not universally adopted by protestant christian churches, has been strictly adhered to by the Congregational churches in New-England, from their earliest plantation in it, to the present day. And as it is an ancient and sacred, so it is an useful and significant rite.

The ministers of our blessed Redeemer are embarked in the same glorious cause. They are professedly the servants of the same God; invested with the same office; preachers of the same gospel, and fellow-labourers in the same vineyard. The work they undertake, of teaching and reforming men, of promoting the interests of piety and righteousness, and of building up the Redeemer's kingdom in the world, is arduous and difficult; and who is sufficient for these things? It is therefore greatly to be desired, that, like a city compact together, they may be cemented in the bonds of christian love, unity, and affection; and may jointly harmonize in their endeavors to promote the salvation of precious

precious and immortal souls. And this, the Right Hand of Fellowship supposes and testifies.

Agreeably, by appointment of the Ecclesiastical Council convened upon this solemn and joyful occasion, and in the name of my brethren in the ministry, I do now, Reverend and dear Sir, give unto you the Right Hand of Fellowship : hereby testifying, that being satisfied with your regular call and qualifications to take part with us in the ministry, we bid you a cordial welcome into the vineyard of our Lord ; and that we shall endeavor to esteem and honor you as a minister of the Prince of Peace, regularly ordained ; a fellow-laborer with us in the work of the Lord, and our brother and companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus.

We testify unto you our cheerful readiness to afford you all the help and assistance we consistently can, in order to your discharging, with fidelity, with honor, and reputation, the ministry you have received of the Lord ; expecting, on our part, the like return from you.

And now, dear Sir, in full confidence that you will be a comfort to us, an honor to the ministry, and a rich blessing to the people of your charge, we heartily and most devoutly commend you to the Father of mercies, and to the guidance, protection, and blessing of Him, who walketh in the midst of his golden candlesticks, and holdeth the stars in his right hand. May a merciful God prolong your life and usefulness, and grant you many souls as the seals of your ministry, and hereafter reward you with eminent degrees of glory.

Brethren of this Church and Society,

Six months ago, we mourned with you under the holy and bereaving hand of heaven ; when God was pleased

pleased to remove, by death, your late amiable and greatly beloved Pastor. Through divine goodness, the scene of providence is quickly reversed. This day is eminently with you, a witness for God, that he is merciful and gracious. Our hearts rise, we trust, with yours, in gratitude to the Father of lights, who is now shining upon this sanctuary. We bow the knee to the great Head of the church, who hath raised up, and furnished you with another Pastor, who, we wish and pray, may prove a rich blessing to you and yours. We participate with you in the joy of this day, and salute you much in the Lord. We intreat you to honor this your Pastor, to esteem him highly in love for his work's sake, and to be at peace among yourselves. Constantly and diligently attend upon his ministry, and receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

We testify unto you our readiness, at all times, to give you our best advice and assistance, as circumstances may call for, according to the true intent and import of the fellowship of the churches, which, by us, is now tendered to you. We wish you may long rejoice in the light of him, whom you have chosen to take the oversight of you in the Lord; that you may be savingly edified by his ministry, and may be each other's crown of joy and rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

And now, *arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.* And may this whole assembly say,

12 DE 67

AMEN.